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THE IRISH DEFENCE JOURNAL NOVEMBER, 1979 30p

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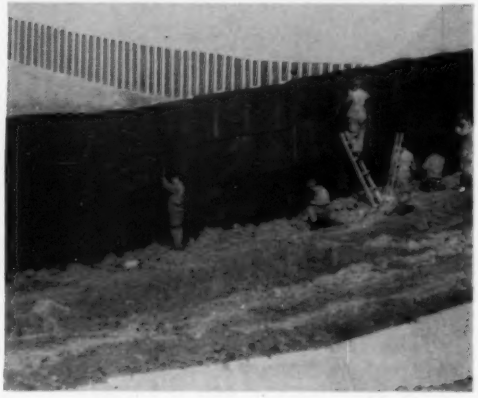
# THE GERMAN BORDER — 1979

Comdt. P. D. O'Donnell

READERS of *An Cosantóir* will be familiar with our own border and with accounts of duties in observation posts on Middle Eastern borders, and with UN peacekeeping duties on international borders generally. The German border between the two Germanys was born of the last World War. It separates the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) from the Federal Republic (West Germany), and runs from Lubeck on the Baltic Sea to the Czechoslovakian frontier. The portion of the Czech border from there to the Austrian border comes into the West German situation but is not covered in this article. This article will examine the German Border section which is covered by the U.S. 11th Armoured Cavalry Regiment, called the Blackhorse Regiment from its activation in 1901 as a horse regiment, and henceforth referred to as 11 ACR. The broad organisation of Western military forces in the region is as follows: Allied Forces Central takes in West Germany and Austria and is flanked by Allied Forces North and Allied Forces South, the latter reaching to the Turkish/Russian border. In Allied Forces Central area the portion north of the line GottingenLiege and as far as Hamburg is called Northag (Northern Army Group) and is the British zone supported by German and other contingents. The portion south of that line and as far as the Austrian-Czech-German conjunction is called Centag (Central Army Group) and is the relevant area to this article. Centag comprises German forces and the U.S. Seventh Army. Its V Corps is in the northern part of Centag and its VII Corps in the southern part. The Seventh Army is parent formation of 11 ACR, and 11 ACR operates in V Corps zone, where it is the forward element of Seventh Army in the vital area of the bulge of East Germany towards Frankfurt-on-Main. The mission of 11 ACR lies along the German Border roughly from Kassel to the Czech frontier conjunction with both Germanys. Its operations are supported by West German Customs Police. On its flanks somewhat similar formations fulfil somewhat similar roles, by which is meant that the 11 ACR has a unique role of close but independent contact. For instance on its right flank is 2 ACR also of Seventh Army though in VII Corps zone. It does not have the same close-to-border tasks as 11 ACR. These are performed by the West German border police. Further south and west lies a U.S. armoured division with the same stand-off pattern. On the left flank of 11 ACR in Northag the German border police act similarly in front of British and German forces. The Eisenach bulge appears to be one factor committing 11 ACR to its particular mission.



EGB Troops working on a border fence.

The mission of 11 ACR is deterrence, detection, and defence. In the event of a deterioration in political relations the Blackhorse Regiment is responsible for detecting a Warsaw Pact forces attack. In the event of a surprise attack it will conduct the initial U.S. defence, as a covering force for its parent formation, Seventh Army. Its day-to-day operations are also intended to secure the territory of West Germany and its civil population from local intrusions. During routine surveillance operations the Regiment gathers as much intelligence information on Warsaw Pact forces as operating restrictions permit.

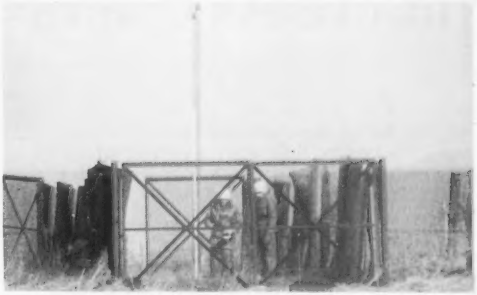
The Regiment is responsible for the peacetime surveillance and security of 385 kilometres of the demarcation line. The regimental headquarters and 1st squadron is located at Fulda. The 2nd squadron is at Bad Kissingen and the 3rd squadron is at Bad Hersfeld. The 11 ACR is also responsible for maintaining a one kilometre strip west of the border. All other U.S. personnel not on duty there and their dependants are forbidden entry to this area.

The 11 ACR is essentially a powerful brigade-sized armoured force of light tanks and self-propelled artillery with a strength of about 3,400 men. It can operate independently over a wide area because of its hundreds of vehicles and radios.

**Terrain:**

The U.S. V Corps area runs north and south through Fulda, towards which the border bulges westwards in the direction of the River Rhine near Frankfurt. The peak of the salient is no more than

E/German Observation Tower approximately 18m high and equipped with searchlight and firing ports.



East German soldiers working on a mine.

100 kilometres from Frankfurt and another 40 kilometres takes one to the Rhine.

There is a gap in the hill country around Fulda. From the latter the hills of the Thuringer Wald flatten out towards the Rhine-Main plain. East of the Fulda valley the terrain favours the defence, giving good tank positions and fields of fire, but the distance to the border is only 15 kilometres.

Immediately west of the Fulda valley rises the heights of the Vogelsberg, while to the north is wooded country along the autobahn through Bad Hersfeld towards Kassel. Southwards towards Bad Kissingen the terrain is mostly barren hills.

The two most likely avenues of approach from East Germany lie through Bad Hersfeld onto the plain north of Frankfurt, and the other, south of the Vogelsberg through Fulda itself, down the Kinzig river valley through Hanau towards Frankfurt.

In the event of a Warsaw Pact forces attack in this sector the army commander's main problem is to determine through which axis the main thrust would come. His mission and initially that of the 11 ACR is to hold attacking forces east of the Frankfurt plain until counterattacks can be launched and reinforcements concentrated. The first actions of 11 ACR would inevitably influence his interpretation of enemy intent and his decision.

**The Background**

The most significent reminder of World War II to-day is the division of Germany into the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Deomcratic Republic (also called Deutchland Democratic Republic — DDR). This division was agreed to by the United States, France, Great Britain and the Soviet Union on 12th September 1944, and became effective on 8th May 1945 when Germany surrendered. By 1st July 1945 the Big Four had adjusted the occupational zone boundaries and relocated their troops within these zones, which have remained unchanged to the present.

For a few months the Big Four organised their occupational zones in accordance with the statement on the control machinery in Germany which was agreed on on 5th June 1945. However the political situation between the Soviet Union and the three Western Powers progressively deteriorated during 1945. Throughout the period the Soviet Army instituted population and resource control measures within the Soviet Zone of Occupation Germany which were viewed by the Western Powers as increasingly regressive. The German population in the Soviet Zone agreed. As many as 1.6 million Germans migrated into the British Occupation Zone of Germany by 30th June 1946. On that date the Soviets closed the demarcation line between the Soviet Zone and the Western Zone of Occupation to free movement.

The closing of the Border did not stop refugees flow. Over the next 20 months hundreds of thousands of Germans east of the Demarcation Line crossed to the West. During this period, France, Great Britain and the United States closely coordinated their occupation policies so that the distinction among their zones was eliminated and the area they controlled became known as West Germany.

By 1948, the continued mass migration of Germans from the Soviet Zone had resulted in a Soviet decision to construct a physical barrier along the demarcation line of its zone. On 11th February 1948, the Red Army constructed road blocks on all roads leading out of its zone to the West. By June of that year, Soviet requirements had brought all interzonal and inland waterway traffic to a standstill. In an effort to police the Berlin Blockade, the Soviets formed units of East German 'People's Police' to patrol the demarcation line.

The effect of the Soviet occupation measures on the East German population is reflected in the refugee figures which were formally registered beginning September 1949. For the last four months of 1949, over 59,000 refugees were recorded. In 1950, there were 197,788 refugees; in 1952, there were 182,393 refugees. It should be noted that the figures for Berlin were not recorded until 1953. In that year 331,390 refugees escaped.

The logic of the situation for the Soviets was irrefutable. East Germany had a population estimated at war's end to be 16 million. By 1949,

E/German Border Defences from OP A.

E/German Border Defences.

over 2.5 million people had fled. Between 1949 and 1953, the figures totalled over 936,000. At the 1953 rate of 300,000 it would take less than a generation to depopulate the Soviet Zone, even if East Germany had a two per cent birth-rate. If the Soviet Union was to have a populated satellite the conclusion was inescapable. The population must be prevented from mass flight.

The construction of barriers along the interzonal border between the Soviet and Western Zones of occupation dates from 26 May 1952. On that date the cabinet council of the German Democratic Republic established by decree the protective measures which would be instituted along the demarcation line. These measures included a control strip; a protective zone; and a restricted zone. The control strip was a ten metre wide area cleared of timber and ploughed, that was parallel to the Demarcation Line but clearly in East Germany. Any person trespassing on this strip was to be shot without challenge by the Frontier Police of East Germany. The Protective Zone was an area 500 meters wide and adjacent to the Border which could be entered only by special pass. Except for the aged and retired, all residents were evacuated from this zone. The Restricted Zone constituted the area within 5 kilometres of the Border and again, a permit was required for entry.

Since the initial decree the East German authorities in conjunction with the Soviets have continuously up-graded the physical barriers along the Interzonal Border. Additionally, since 1961 the East German Army Border Command, over 40,000 strong, conducts 24-hour surveillance of the Border along its entire length. In spite of this effort, from fifteen thousand to forty thousand East Germans have escaped every year since 1961. However, the construction of the modern border barrier has brought this figure down to one hundred people or less in recent times, each year.

As a result, since late 1970, the East German Border Command embarked on an intensive border modernisation programme to try and stop the flow of refugees once and for all. East German authorities are convinced that a large percentage of East Germans would flee if they were not restrained by the border barrier. That such a threat to East German autonomy still exists should be at once acknowledged by the tumultuous reception given to Chancellor Willi Brandt in Erfurt, East Germany in Spring of 1970.

The border barriers since have developed from a simple barbed wire fence in the 1950s to the improved fence with concrete posts in the 60s, to the elaborate metal grid fence of the 70s. By 1976 the Border modernisation programme was completed, making it the longest barrier of freedom of its kind in the world.

**Organisation:**

The 11th A.C.R. is organised with a headquarters, a provisional squadron, and three armoured cavalry squadrons. The provisional squadron consists of an air cavalry troop, an engineer company, and a headquarters troop. Each cavalry squadron is responsible for 100 to 180 kms of border area. These sectors are normally covered by each squadron using mounted jeep patrols and fixed observation posts. As previously mentioned the ground patrols in addition are responsible for controlling a zone extending westward one kilometre from the border. The zone is off limits to US personnel to prevent inadvertent border violations by them. Each patrol makes physical contact daily with the US patrol on its flanks and with the appropriate FRG (Federal Republic of Germany) agencies. The West Germans do not control any approaches to the border. The only warnings are signs posted on every road and track one hundred meters from the border, as well of course as the above mentioned US patrols in the US areas.

Each squadron of the 11th ACR is made up of three armoured cavalry troops equipped with the M551 Sheridan tank and armoured personnel carriers. In addition, each squadron headquarters has a howitzer battery with self-propelled 155 mm howitzers and a tank company with M60A2 tanks. An air cavalry troop operates under regiment.

The major avenues of approach into West

Germany (FRG) within the 11th ACR sector are covered by constant surveillance from fixed observation posts. Five permanently manned O.P.s observe along the more likely avenues of approach from East Germany into the V Corps area. Four of these OPs are wooden towers, the fifth and southernmost OP is a concrete bunker. These OPs are sometimes called outposts, but see below, they are more than OPs.

Each of these permanent structures provides good observation of a major sector of the border and the threat avenues of approach leading up to the border. The OPs are also used as sites for command and control, radio relay, coordination, re-supply, and stop-over accommodation for border patrols and other tactical operations in the border zone. The permanent observation posts are normally manned by a platoon sized force. This strength provides a 24-hour observation capability and a small reaction force, if needed. Both patrol and OP surveillance capabilities are enhanced through use of binoculars, telescopes, ground surveillance radar, and passive night vision equipment. These items provide for both night and day surveillance across the border.

The observation posts are manned in approximately a month's rotation of a platoon. The most southerly outpost OP has its living accommodation 18 kilometers south of Camp Wollback, from which four soldiers are rotated to the concrete bunker daily. A feature of their sophisticated surveillance devices is a zoom type telescope of 15 to 60X power. The regiment maintains squad and platoon ready-reaction forces on 15 minute standby.

Ground and helicopter patrols cover the entire border trace once every 24-hour period. Each ground patrol consists of two jeeps, each with a three-man team. If a patrol encounters a one kilometer violator one jeep escorts the violator out of the area, while the other continues on patrol. Daily aerial surveillance is accomplished primarily by the Air Cavalry Troop in OH-58 Light Observation Helicopters, which are generally flown with the support of "Cobra" gunships.

**West German Agencies.** (Federal Republic of Germany)

The Regiment is assisted in its border surveillance by two FRG agencies, the Bundesgrenschutz or Federal Border Police, and the Zollgrensdienst or Federal Customs Police. The BGS (Border Police) which is subordinate to the FRG Ministry of Interior is assigned to protect West Germany against illegal border crossings, and to secure the entire border against disturbance from inside and outside the state.

The Regiment maintains liaison and works with one other German agency, the Bavarian Border Police where the border runs east of Bavaria. The BGS or West German Border police are equipped as *light infantry*.

The BGS performs its daily duty through regular motorised patrols of the border. In this respect they work very closely with the 11th ACR. Elements of the BGS are held on immediate alert to react in cases of emergency to critical points along the border. The BGS patrols the border with two-man dismounted teams and motorised patrols. It also conducts aerial patrols with French Alouette or UH-1D helicopters. The ZGD or Customs police had as their original mission control of goods crossing FRGs borders. As that is somewhat reduced now an added task has been the policing of the East-West Border. The Zoll (for short) patrol techniques differ from the 11th ACR (US) and from the BGS systems. Each Zoll representative lives in the area he patrols. Patrols are normally conducted on foot with dogs. Since these Zoll officers are residents of the border towns and villages in their areas, they have an intimate knowledge of their own sector of operation.

**East Germany (DDR)** (Deutschland Democratic Republic)

The DDR Border Surveillance has its origins in the immediate post WW II time period. After the division of Germany into zones of occupation by the Allied Powers, the Soviet Zone was sealed off from the West. The Soviet troops originally patrolled the border area until the political situation within East Germany was stabilised. With the formation of the internal government within East Germany, the East German Border Surveillance Units were organised. These units then began to patrol the interzonal border utilising foot and motorised patrols. The border then had no significant barriers or obstacles at this time. The border area was indicated by a ten-meter wide control strip cleared of timber and ploughed regularly to prevent vegetation from obscuring visibility.

The mobile vehicular and foot patrols guarded the border areas in conjunction with population control measures. The following years led to improvements in the border obstacles and surveillance equipment. The present East German Border Command has stationed company size units in the border areas and uses observation towers, and foot, vehicular and aerial patrols. The observation towers and foot and vehicular patrols are designed to detect illegal border crossers and unauthorised personnel within the boarder restricted areas. The air patrols are apparently used to monitor their overall border surveillance operations.

The East German Border companies conduct border surveillance operations by platoon. Information indicates that each platoon conducts eight or nine shifts of patrol duty/OP duty followed

by a 24-hour off duty period. The patrols and the manning of their observation towers usually lasts for a period of four to twelve hours. Individual guard duties however normally require a maximum of eight hours. Guards primarily work in pairs, but at night three guards sometimes work together. Their night operations often use infra red or other night observation equipment. The border guards are also equipped with night field glasses.

**The Border**

The border itself is indicated by several markers. The oldest are 19th century stone markers. These stones delineated the Kingdom of Prussia from the Kingdom of Hesse and are marked K.P. on one side and K.H. on the other. The East Germans then erected tall concrete posts painted red, yellow, and black (German colours) which are designed to mark the border for observers at a distance. These are usually one or two meters inside East Germany. In the early fifties the East Germans also surveyed the border unilaterally and erected unpainted wooden stakes which they claim marked the border. However, white stakes now show the border as agreed on by joint East-West German survey teams.

Twenty to thirty meters east of the border begins the modern East German border barrier system. This new fence is the third generation of fencing. The first was no barrier at all. The second was stronger and enforced with mine fields. This new border barrier system is both intensive and expensive. In V Corps (US) area, its section was begun in early 1972 and cost an estimated million dollars per kilometer then. The major components are a metal grid fence, an anti-vehicular ditch, a ploughed strip, a concrete patrol strip, and the communications net.

The metal grid fence is about three meters tall above ground and one foot deep. It consists of concrete posts three meters apart and four overlapping segments of metal grid. The most recent addition to this fence is the SM-70 anti-personnel mine. This small conical device is attached by a metal frame to the concrete post. Its directional charge is powerful enough to puncture the three-quarter inch metal grid. Nowadays to prevent this the distance between the cone and the fence has been increased and the fence itself patched over to renew its strength from being holed too many times.

The SM-70s are attached to every other concrete post and alternate from top to middle to bottom. The mines are either trip-wire activated or command detonated. An electrical current must be provided though for either activation.

East of the metal grid fence is the anti-vehicular ditch consisting of concrete slabs tilted at 30 degrees from the vertical, and emplaced in a one-meter deep ditch. It is designed to halt east to west movement of vehicles. Behind the ditch, to the east, is a ploughed strip of about three to five meters wide. East German Army Border Command patrols on the concrete patrol road can readily detect footprints in the ploughed area and get some idea of the effectiveness of the fence. The concrete patrol strip facilitates rapid movement to any point along the border. The communications net parallels the road and permits border command personnel to plug into portable telephones and call immediately for assistance.

The concrete prefabricated towers are situated at intervals of about two kilometers. These towers greatly assist observation but in East rather than in West Germany. Each tower mounts a powerful searchlight at the top and has rectangular gun ports for shooting at illegal border crossers. In addition lights, control booths, and electrical signal fencing help control the border. Security is especially tight at legal crossing points. A one-meter square steel column housed in this concrete facility can be placed across the road automatically to block traffic. Elaborate inspection booths and guard towers have been erected to search and check at all legal crossings. And even with all these precautions people still manage to cross over into West Germany.

**WW III**

It is interesting to note the recent book *The Third World War* by General Sir John Hackett and others. He opens chapter one with the first radio message of the attack by Warsaw Pact Forces in the year 1985. It goes: 'Black Horse One Zero, Black House One Zero, this is Shovel Six. Confirming Charlie One's sighting as follows: large armoured formation passed through the inter-German border Zero Three Zero Five Zulu approximate brigade in size. Composed of Papa Tango 76s, Bravo Tango Romeo 62s, and Tango 72s. Inform Black Horse Six that Shovel is engaging. Out.' He was referring , of course, to the 11th Armoured Cavalry Regiment, the Black Horse Regiment of the U.S. Army whom I have been describing. Hackett then describes the mythical actions of a Captain of 11 ACR looking east towards Eisenach, actually opposite the present area of 11 ACR, who are located in the centre of CENTAG at the bulge of Fulda where the East German border bulges towards Bonn and Frankfurt.

Paraphrasing the first page of this unusual book:

The Captain sees scores of armoured vehicles moving rapidly towards him on both sides of the autobahn, and he knew what it was, the advanced guard of an attacking Soviet formation. His fifteen Shillelagh-firing Sheridan tanks were in defilade behind him towards Bad Hersfeld. Often they had practised engaging an enemy. Today it is for real. He grips his mike and heard his voice: 'Shovel, this is Six. Engage at will. Out'. Almost before he had

released the button one heard the roar of Shillelagh missiles leaving fifteen tubes, guided on their way to targets silhouetted in the sad grey August morning. This part-paraphrase, part-quote is sufficient to give the idea.

The Black Horse Regiment were once again carrying the cudgel for their country as they had in the Phillipines, Mexico, Europe and Vietnam.

Nowadays they have neither blackthorns nor black horses, but it might just happen to them or to some other regiment patrolling the unique border between East and West Germany.

(C) P. D. O'D.

NOTE:
Grateful thanks are expressed for the cooperation and help of Colonel John Berres, former U.S. Defence Attache, Dublin.

# LETTER TO EDITOR

3, Greenlea Park,
Terenure, Dublin 6.

The Editor
*An Cosantoir*

UNIFORM QUERIES

Dear Sir,

Some Officers' Training Corps units during the 1929-1935 period wore special coloured shoulder boards for dress and social occasions. University College Dublin had light blue with three saffron stripes. Apparently University College Galway did not wear coloured shoulder boards. Do any of your readers know what coloured shoulder boards were worn by the following OTC units - Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork, The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Veterinary College of Ireland and St. Patrick's Training College.

Any information in regard to this query would ve very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,
F. Glenn Thompson

The National Museum have no uniforms of the LDF, LSF, or regiment of Pearse in their collections and would be glad to hear from anyone who can help them acquire samples of them.

**(Contd. from page 357)**

which he used to effect in both Irish and English. The narrator, Capt. Wally Young, guided the audience through the narrative, which commenced with the burning of the GPO, and then went back through Pearse's formative years, with the background of the period being illustrated with music, drama, and poetry. Dancers were from the Sylvia Behan School of Ballet, and the Droichead Nua Irish Figure Dancing class; The Moat Players, Naas, The Eugene Nolan Ensemble and the Boys Choir of Scoil Mhuire, Newbridge and thirty cadets completed the large cast. The setting were simple and effective, and the projection of slides in one episode proved effective. Altogether a worthy commemoration of two important occasions.

C. C.

# THE FIRST R.C. CHAPLAIN

**Christopher Carroll**

ON the 13th February, 1864, the funeral of the Right Reverend Monsignor William Yore, P.P. V.G., St. Paul's, Arran Quay, Dublin, took place to Glasnevin Cemetery, a burial ground which, with the help of Daniel O'Connell, The Liberator and others, he helped to establish. He was the priest who was delegated by Most Rev. Dr. Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, to bless the burial ground on 21st February, 1832.

Early in life William Yore attracted the attention of the famous Father Gahan who took him to reside with him at John's Lane Convent. In 1800 the youth went to St. Patrick's College, Carlow, to pursue his studies for the priesthood. On being ordained he was appointed chaplain of Kilmainham Prison. During his chaplaincy he had to witness some revolting scenes at the numerous executions at a time when death was the penalty for many minor offences.

On being appointed Parish Priest of St. Paul's sometime prior to 1829 he found the chapel hidden away in a back lane, but soon obtained a site on Arran Quay where the Church now stands. The steeple, crowned by a cross, contains the bells which were the first to be pealed following the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in the British Parliament in 1829 in thanksgiving.

When the British become involved in the Crimean War in 1854, Monsignor Yore made representations to the Crown that justice had not been done to Catholic soldiers and as a result of his efforts Roman Catholic Chaplains to the troops were appointed, and by the regimental rules, the men were marched to their place of worship on Sundays, just as Protestant soldiers were marched to theirs. When the troops were about to embark for the Crimea, St. Paul's presented an animated scene. The long lines of kneeling soldiers receiving Holy Communion from the hand of Monsignor Yore was in itself a touching spectacle. It became more touching when later on it became known that many of these soldiers would not return from the battlefields.

Monsignor Yore was a great friend of the helpless and the poor of Dublin. His mortal remains are in a vault in the Tower Circle of Glasnevin Cemetery which is surmounted by a Celtic Cross.

**(Contd. from page 358)**

**adverse comment; rather he commended the work. Of course he did. The facts as presented by Con Ryan couldn't be questioned. As a reporting, considering the time lag, it is without parallel. It is the omissions I am questioning.**

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# EDUCATION IN THE DEFENCE FORCES - PART IV

Capt. Peter Young

**Professional Education**

THE basic course for officers is the Young Officers course which is held in the Artillery School, Kildare. It lasts for five months and covers a wide range of basic Artillery subjects such as Gundrill, Deployment Drills and Artillery duties in action. Occasionally, Standard Artillery Officers Courses which last for four months are held in the School. These courses are held for senior Lieutenants. Battery Commanders Courses are also run when required for Artillery Captains who have already completed the Standard course. The course lasts for two months and includes such subjects as Advanced Fireplanning and Tactical application of Artillery at Brigade and Battalion level.

A course for FCA Potential Officers is also held in the School. This course lasts two weeks and is open to selected FCA NCOs prior to commissioning. For NCOs there is a four month Potential NCOs Course in the School. The course is similar to the Infantry course but with particular reference to subjects of an artillery nature.

**Technical Education**

The Corps runs two technical courses for officers, a Technical Officers Course (2 months) and a Gun Position Officers Course (6 weeks). The courses are run in the Artillery School and are open to senior Lieutenants who have had practical experience at Regimental level. The Technical Course includes lectures on the use of instruments, fire planning and surveying, while the Gun Position Course covers all duties in action associated with field artillery batteries and the capability to run a command post. Battery and Regimental Surveyor courses for Gunners and NCOs are run for those who have the ability to master mathematical computations. The courses last from 6 to 10 weeks and NCOs who qualify as Regimental Surveyors qualify for grade pay. A two week operators course on the Artillery Fire Simulator is also held at intervals for NCO Surveyors Class I who also qualify for grade pay. Eight week Artillery Number 1 courses for NCOs who show capability as potential Subsection Commanders are held regularly while there are 3 Star (4 - 6 weeks) and Signallers (2 weeks) Courses for Gunners.

1st Anti Aircraft Regiment also run specialist courses in Aircraft Recognition, AA Training and the GPMG in the AA role.

**External and Overseas Courses**

A one-year Gunner Staff Course is held at the Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill, England. Candidates for this course must be fully qualified i.e. have passed their Y.O.s, G.P.O.s, Standard and Technical Officers courses prior to entry. Subjects include all aspects of gunnery, use of computers and lasers, surveying and communications.

A three week course for Artillery Draughtsmen is run at intervals by the Corps of Engineers in the Curragh. Corps personnel also attend such courses as Regimental Signallers and Transport courses.

## Supply and Transport Corps

**Technical Education**

A Basic S & T Officers Course which lasts for six months is held at the Corps School in the Curragh. Subjects include Rations and Food, Motor Vehicle Technology, Workshop Practice, Driver Training, Administration and Accountancy etc. This course is generally followed by a Standard S & T Course which lasts for one month. Again this course is held in the Corps School. The purpose of the course is to train officers to fill appointments as S & T Captains and to give them a detailed knowledge of the operation of a S & T field Company. Subjects include Administration, Tactical Deployment, MT Movements, Training and Staff Duties. Finally for officers, a battalion and regimental S & T Course is also run in the Corps School which lasts for two months. The subjects on the course are similar to those on the Basic Course.

For NCOs there are two courses held in the Corps School, the Basic MT NCOs Technical Course and the Standard Driving Instructors Course. The Technical Course runs for one month and is open to NCOs with AF 154s. Subjects include Technical Training, MT administration and Tactical Training. The Instructors Courses last for three weeks and include Methods of Instruction, Towing and Recovery, Fault Finding and Cross Country Driving.

The final technical course run by the Corps is the MT Drivers Course which lasts for seven weeks. As well as driving assorted vehicles, subjects such as Maintenance, Administration and March Discipline are covered. This course is open to 3x soldiers and the success rate is approximately 80 per cent.

**General Education**

During 1977/78 two members of the Corps were studying for the 2nd Class Certificate while one NCO and 40 Privates were attending an AnCO training centre on a full time basis studying Motor Vehicle Technology, Garage Practice and Workshop Practice.

**External Courses**

Selected S & T officers regularly attend the College of Technology, Bolton Street, for a three year course leading to a Diploma in Motor Industry Management.

### Medical Corps

**Professional/Technical Education**

Two and Three Star (Medical) Courses and Potential NCOs Courses are held in the Depot AMC, Curragh Camp. The courses which last from 4 to 7 weeks include such subjects as Anatomy, Physiology, Hygiene and Sanitation and Stretcher Drill. A six week course for Dental Surgery Attendants is held in the Dental Laboratory, St. Bricins. The success rate in all courses is from 85% to 90%.

**General Education**

NCOs and Men of the Corps were studying for the following examinations in 1978.

| | |
|---|---|
| 2nd Class Certificate | 6 |
| Group Certificate | 2 |
| Leaving Certificate | 1 |

**External and Overseas Courses**

Ten day courses for Young Officers organized by the International Committee of Military Medicine and Pharmacy are held each year in different European countries while three week Post Graduate courses in Internal Medicine are run in Edinburgh University.

### Military Police Corps

**Professional Education**

The following courses are held in the Military Police School in the Curragh.

a. **Officers Introductory Courses** for officers entering the Corps. Subjects on the course which lasts for five weeks, include Police Duties, Military Law and Provost Operations.
b. **Probationer Courses** for potential Military Police prior to entry into the Corps. Candidates must be 3x soldiers with good physique, minimum height (5' 8") and a satisfactory conduct rating. Emphasis is placed on the Military Police aspects of normal military training as well as specific subjects such as powers of MPs, Laws of Evidence, Police Duties, Traffic Control and Provost Operations. The course, which lasts from 12 to 16 weeks, has a 70% success rate.
c. **Sergeants Courses** which are qualifying courses for promotion. Candidates must be Corporals with a satisfactory conduct rating. Subjects include Military Law, Police Duties, Investigation and Crime Detection and Provost Operations. The course lasts for 5 weeks and the success rate is normally 100%.

**Technical Education**

There are four basic courses run for Corps personnel under this heading.

a. Crime Investigation Courses which are run by the Gardai at either their Training Centre, Templemore or at the Garda Technical Bureau, Dublin. All Military Police Officers and selected NCOs who show above average rating in police duties may undergo this course which lasts for 5 weeks. Subjects include Laws of Evidence, study of criminal offences, use of photographs, statements, fingerprints etc.
b. **Fingerprint Courses** which are held at the Garda Technical Bureau, Dublin. Candidates are selected NCOs who have completed a Crime Investigation Course and who have shown an inclination for these specialist courses. The course lasts for two weeks and deals basically with practical fingerprinting.
c. **Drug Abuse Courses** run by the Garda Technical Bureau. No specific syllabus is followed on this course. NCOs who have completed "a" above may take this course which lasts 2/3 weeks.
d. **Photographic Courses** as an aid to Crime Investigation (2 weeks). The Photographic Section, Baldonnel and the Garda Technical Bureau are the locations for these courses.

**General Education**

During the 1977/78 academic year the following Military Police personnel were attending the following

| | |
|---|---|
| Group Certificate | 3 NCOs |
| Leaving Certificate | 2 NCOs (privately) |

Also 2 NCOs were attending University studying for a Diploma in Social Science. The course runs for two years and students attend for two nights each week.

**External and Overseas Courses**

As well as those listed under Technical Education, Officers and NCOs may attend Scene of Crime Courses (6 weeks) at the Royal Military Police Training Centre, Roussillon Barracks, Chichester, England. An Advanced Military Police Course for officers is held at Fort McClellan, Alabama, USA which lasts for eight months.

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# CURRAGH COMMAND

The Curragh Gymnastics Team which has just completed one of the most successful years in its history, which included an appearance at the Rose of Tralee Festival. Front (L to R): Ptes. Ciaran Dykes, William Robinson, Cpl. William Barnes, Sgt. Jim Campbell, and Pte. Chris Ward. Back: Ptes. Brendan Lynch, Paul Lambe, Cpls. Sean Domican, Gerry Loftus, Sgt. Paul Clancy, Ptes. Pat Maguire and Michael O'Hara. (Photo: O. McCrossan)

Pte. Jerome de Loughrey presenting a plaque to Comdt. N. G. Hegarty, School Comdt. ASPC on behalf of the members of the 23rd Standard Physical training instructors Course.

Comdt. Barry Studdart, Secretary of the Curragh Golf Society, who won the Kevin Deeny Perpetual Trophy as Golfer of the Year. (Photo: O. McCrossan)

Brigadier General D. Hurley, GOC Curragh Command making a presentation to Brig. General P. D. Hogan to mark his retirement from the Defence Forces, at a function in Ceannt Officers Mess. (Photo: O. McCrossan)

## CANOEING

Lt. M. P. O'Farrell

The 4th annual All-Army Canoe Race was held on Wednesday (10th Oct) on a ten mile course, starting at the head of Leixlip Lake and finishing at the Garda Boat Club in Islandbridge.

A total of thirty paddlers took part, of which twenty two completed the course, after negotiating a 400m portage and seven weirs in flood condition.

Paddlers competed in three classes, K1, Touring and Slalom while the Army Sub Aqua team provided rescue parties at the weirs along the course.

**RESULTS**

| | | | Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Class K1** | | | |
| 1st | Capt. D. Collins | Collins Bks | 1.15.35 |
| 2nd | Cpl. R. Howe | Depot Cav. | 1.18.05 |
| 3rd | Sgt. D. Howe | Depot AMC | 1.21.25 |
| **Class Tourinæ** | | | |
| 1st | C/S Murphy | 1 Garr. Ord. | 1.32.25 |
| **Class Slalom** | | | |
| 1st | Lt. F. O'Reilly | 27 Bn. | 1.31.15 |
| 2nd | Pte. Kelly | 2 Bn. | 1.31.50 |
| 3rd | Appr. Dillon | A.A.S. | 1.33.45 |

The team event was won by The Eastern Command.

# NAVAL SERVICE

The latest addition to the Naval Service is the L.E. Aisling shown above prior to launching. Below the Minister for Defence with S/Lt. T. Meehan, N.S. prior to the ceremony. (N. S. photo)

WOs P. J. Crowe; M. Egan; F. Cullen and L. Connick on the occasion of WO Cullen's retirement recently.


**Why leave it to others?**

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Everyday there are both emergency and routine cases requiring blood transfusions in hospitals throughout the country. To cater adequately for this demand 2,600 blood donations are required overall, each week. If you are between 18 and 65, and in good general health, you can give a blood donation.

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Pelican House Clinic Times** | Monday | 9.30 am-8-15 pm |
| | Tuesday | 9.30 am-8.15 pm |
| | Wednesday | 9.30 am-4.15 pm |
| | Thursday | 9.30 am-4.15 pm |
| | Friday | 9.30 am-4.15 pm |
| | Including lunchtime. | |
| **Cork Centre Clinic Times** | Tuesdays | 12.00 noon-3.00 pm including lunchtime |
| | Thursdays | 5.00-8.00 pm |
| | Fridays | 10.00-12.30 pm |

**The Blood Transfusion Service Board**

**Pelican House, 52 Lr. Leeson Street, Dublin 2. Phone (01) 766981**

**Cork Centre, 21 Leitrim Street, Cork. Phone (021) 57227**

**Message from Lebanon**

*During the recent visit of the Minister for Defence and the Chief of Staff to the Irish Contingent in Lebanon the Muchtar of Tibnin gave this address:*

*This is a great occasion and honourable moment, meeting you here in this troubled spot in the South of Lebanon. On behalf of the Muchtar of Tibnin and the citizens of Tibnin I welcome you all as representatives for the country, which is in our opinion become a source of security, meanwhile you do not hold a lot in your possession - the superior kind of giving is when you give generously from the least you have. That is an Arabic saying.*

*Eighteen months ago, and just before your first battalion arrived in this district, we had in our mind that Ireland is the synonym word to Lebanon from a certain point of view.*

*So it was spontaneous that your great initiative was to be the first in sharing with the UNIFIL, and when your Foreign Affairs Minister adopted our matter and dedicated every effort at the United Nations Security Council to restore peace in Lebanon, it was not peculiar because the people who suffered a lot from the troubles would share with us, suffering bitterly from the alienation in our country.*

*Everyone of us appreciates very much your men in the 45th Battalion, and its commander, Lt. Col. Quinlan for the many things they have achieved. I would like also to seize this opportunity to thank deeply from our hearts Comdt. Martin; the MP Officer, Lt. Bonar; Comdt. Smith and Comdt. Doyle for their effective turn in in helping the citizens in many aspects.*

*Now, while the whole world look at the aeroplane of peace pass through the atmosphere, which is full of hot selfishness and frozen war, the aeroplane of peace carrying "Le Saintete", the Pope from the Vatican to the United Nations through one stop in the world, in Ireland. And at that time the Lebanese are looking at your visit with delighted hope, that the 9th of October 1979, the date of your visit, will be an historical winding for a prevailing truce and harder stability.*

*We have a firm belief that, with your fidelity and wisdom you will solve these complicated and fine problems, and all the help to re establish the Lebanese authority in this region, very soon we hope. Sir, the Minister, we want your emblems to remain in our fields since there is a problem in Lebanon. And tomorrow when the clouds are dispelled, and peace leads our steps, and after that your plant, The Shamrock, the symbol of affection, will remain eternally a good memory in our minds.*

*Thank You.*


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## OFFICERS PROMOTIONS - OCTOBER

| Name | To | From | To |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nunan, K. | Brig. Gen. | D/Cav | GOC Southern Command |
| Learnihan, A. | Col. | SO D/S & T | D/S & T |
| Dixon, P.M. | Lt. Col. | Comd. S & T Offr. HQ W. Comd. | EO HQ W. Comd. |
| Monaghan, P. | Lt. Col. | RCDS Comdt. (Kildare) | Comdt. Adjt. HQ C Comd. |
| Ryan, T. E. | Lt. Col. | Ops. Sec. CS Branch | Ops. Staff HQ C Comd. |
| McCourt, P. A. | Comdt. | HQ E. Comd. | Retains |
| Sheehan, M. | Comdt. | HQ S. Comd. | Retains |

## N.C.O.'s PROMOTIONS - AUGUST

| Rank | Name | Unit | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sgt. | Fox, J. | 2 Bn. | CQMS |
| Sgt. | Dunne, T. | 27 Bn. | CQMS |
| Sgt. | Nolan, J. | AHQ | Coy/Sgt. |
| PO | Bradley, E. | NS | SPO |
| PO | Walsh, M. | NS | SPO |

## N.C.O.'s PROMOTIONS - SEPTEMBER

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| C/S | Reilly, B. | 3 Inf. Bn. | BSM |
| CQMS | Power, J. | HQ CC | BQMS |
| CQMS | Quigley, J. | 6 Inf. Bn. | C/S |
| Sgt. | Fennelly, V. | 2 Fld. COE | C/S |
| Sgt. | Donagh, P. | A/C | C/S |
| Sgt. | Gorman, W. | 6 FA Regt. | CQMS |
| Sgt. | Martin, T. | 29 Inf. Bn. | CQMS |
| Sgt. | Murphy, J. | 29 Inf. Bn. | CQMS |
| Sgt. | Bradley, M. | 28 Inf. Bn. | |

## N.C.O.'s PROMOTIONS - OCTOBER

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CQMS | Farragher, F. | Mil. Det. Bks. | BQMS |
| Sgt. | Deegan, R. | GT Depot | BQMS |
| PO | Cummins, B. | NS | CPO |
| C/S | Bradley, P. | Clancy Bks. | BSM |
| Sgt. | Clarke, M. | Obs. Corps | BQMS |
| Sgt. | Esmonde, P. | Depot Sigs. | C/S |

# GROUP SAVINGS SCHEME WITH THE TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS

The Department of Defence in co-operation with the Trustee Savings Banks at Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Waterford (including city branches) Dundalk, Monaghan, Dungarvan, Galway, Cobh and Middleton has decided to introduce a savings scheme for all personnel .

The scheme is open to all personnel and not only those stationed in areas where branch offices exist, as transactions can be done by post.

The scheme is voluntary and operates by deduction from pay. A fixed amount will be lodged to your personal account in the bank of your choice.

The full range of banking facilities will be available to all members in the scheme.

Deductions start
MEN-1st Januarv. 1980
OFFICERS-1st January, 1980

# Remembering 'THE WAR'

**Comdt. Padraic O'Farrell**

*'Actors waiting in the wings of Europe*
*we already watch the lights on the stage*
*and listen to the colossal overture begin . .*

*Keith Douglas.*

Two radiograms, each of a single code word, put the British Fleet on a war-footing on 3 September, 1939.

The first 'gram announced a state of tension. The second contained a direction to every commander:

**Begin Hostilities!**

Adolf Hitler left his Chancellory in Berlin for the Eastern Front where he assumed command of the German armies.

'Our plutocratic enemies will realise that they are now dealing with a different army from that of the year 1914', he said.

President Roosevelt broadcast to the world and declared his country's neutrality, adding: '. . . but every American cannot be asked to remain neutral in thought . . .'

A lady placed flowers on the Cenotaph as a telegraph boy cycled up to No. 10 Downing Street with a private greeting for the Prime Minister.

Big Ben struck 1100 hours.

The war 'was on'.

Our own army became a vital institution. Mr. de Valera had made it clear that Ireland would adopt a policy of neutrality. Europe and the world knew that such a policy would succeed only as long as the warring powers chose to condone it. But Government knew that a determined Defence Force, however small or ill equipped would resist any invasion and that the prospect of such opposition would mitigate against any strategic plan to overrun the island.

It was therefore with a certain degree of confidence that Mr. de Valera pledged that this country would not be used as a base for any attack against Britain. Vigorous measures were necessary, however, in order to fit the Defence Forces to supporting that pledge.

Mobilisation had already begun as the government halted all transfers to the Reserve for personnel who had completed their term of service and ordered the call up of some Reservists. That was on 1 Sept. A and B reservists, Volunteer Coast Defence Artillery, the Volunteer Coastwatching Service and Volunteer M.T. drivers were affected.

The call-up was soon extended to include Anti-Aircraft searchlight personnel, 2 Field Artillery Brigade and in the final phase all remaining Volunteers that were not granted exemptions received call-up notices.

This action brought the strength of the Defence Forces from 7,494 to 17,156 all ranks.

Volunteers manning a 3 inch Anti Aircraft Gun at Gormanston Camp, August, 1939.

It was not, however, until 7 June 1940 that The Emergency' was declared.

Germany had occupied Denmark and Norway and had invaded the Low Countries where the Belgian Army had capitulated. German tank forces in the South cut off the British Expenditionary Force and the French First Army. By 27 May they had reached Dunkirk, a port in Northern France. This period of 'lightning war', the Blitzkrieg, based on tank penetration and use of air power was a total success. During the following eight days over 200,000 British troops and 120,000 French were evacuated in close to 900 vessels, many of them small craft that had made a hasty dash across the channel.

There was great tension as the world waited for Hitler's next move. There was some tension in messes and canteens here too and the first batch of Emergency Durationists arrived.

The *E-Man* could enlist up to forty years of age. His conditions were similar to the regular soldiers except that his period of service was only for the duration of the emergency.

Mr. de Valera himself spearheaded the recruiting drive and by the time that great apic of fact and folklore, the forty two manoeuvre, transpired the army's strength was 38,782 all ranks.

Because of the country's long coastline and because of the possibility of an airborne invasion, mobility was a keynote in defence planning. A magnified version of the Flying Columns that had served the country so well in the War of Independence was established. But they were part of an overall grouping within two Divisions. Each Division had three Brigades which in turn had three

Battalions. Within these Battalions the Columns operated and comprised a Company of Infantry and a Section of Artillery.

Brigade Headquarters were located as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1st | Clonmel |
| 2nd | Dublin |
| 3rd | Cork |
| 4th | Mullingar |
| 5th | Curragh |
| 6th | Dublin |
| 7th | Limerick |
| 8th | Rineanna |

There was keen rivalry between brigades and a feature of wartime soldiering was the interest shown by civilians in the armed forces. Their participation in the Local Security Force (L.S.F.), Local Defence Force (L.D.F.) (which at one stage reached a strength of 103,530), Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance, A.R.P., apart, some Soldiers'Comforts and Soldiers' Dependents Welfare Committees were formed.

Military Tattoos, Revues, Sports, Sokol Drill displays and other entertainments were held.

Various public buildings and big houses accommodated troops. Indeed, I know a staff officer of a certain County Council that sits at an 'Emergency' Brigade O.C.'s desk to this day. He will not accept any of the nice new tiered-drawer models with which his colleagues are being issued. The man served under the Brigade Commander and some say he takes a secret pleasure out of using it.

Turf cutting operations were embarked upon - and many a rural maiden got her first ecstatic glimpse of a soldier's uniform. I know of one who swore that bulls wool on heather was as soft a pallet as one could wish for!

The young unemployed of Dublin city, part of the nation's 18,000, footed turf in Clonsast. This experiment was followed by the establishment of the Construction Corps in 1940. The idea got bogged down - literally - in the *Cluais Scheme.* Construction Corps youths excavated a site and built their own camp in a desolate bog in Connemara.

The idea was that they should drain the bog but nobody had found a place to which the water should be channelled.

Meanwhile the Germans had invaded Yugoslavia and Greece and was attacking Russia on a 2,000 mile front.

Then followed Pearl Harbour, December 1941; Alamein, October 1942 - and the turn of the tide. The Axis ejected from North Africa. Sicily and Italy invaded and the first peace with the Italians in September, 1943.

The Normandy invasion; the liberation of Paris. the link up with the Russians at the Elbe and finally Germany's unconditional surrender at Rheims on 7 May, 1945.

After the official announcement in Britain on 8 May - Searchlights flashed 'V' signs over Southampton docks as ships' sirens sounded throughout the night. The *Daily Mirror* finally disrobed the tantalizingly clad female that had adorned its pages throughout the war. Trafalgar Square was full of celebrating civilians and servicemen.

All over the world, not least here in Ireland, soldiers were faced with the task of re-adjustment - either to civilian life or to peace-time soldiering. It was difficult - almost as difficult as attempting to present a 'bayonet-tip' sketch of the catastrophic epic, the fortieth anniversary of which has already begun.

*Everyone, I suppose, will use these minutes to look back, to hear music and recall what we were doing and saying that year during our last few months as people, near the sucking mouth of the day, that swallowed us all into the stomach of a war . .'*

*Keith Douglas.*

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# THE FOUR COURTS GUNS

Lt. Col. Niall Harrington (Retd.)*

AT dusk on the evening of Tuesday, 27th June, 1922, a group of Army officers from the Free State Headquarters of Beggars Bush barracks, arrived at the British artillery lines in Marlborough (now McKee) Barracks in the Phoenix Park, to collect two 18 pounder field-guns together with a supply of ammunition.

The transfer of the guns had been arranged by General Eoin O'Duffy, Assistant Chief of Staff, in communication with General Sir Neville Macready, C.O.C. of the British forces, which were then in process of evacuation from the 26 county area.

This was the opening saga of that much discussed event of the Civil War of 1922: the battle for the Four Courts and the siege of the buildings by British guns in Irish hands. The guns were required to lend support to the demand by the Provisional Government requiring the surrender of the Republican Four Courts garrison and the release of their prisoner, Lt. General J. J. O'Connell, Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff of the Free State Army.

The officer party from Beggars Bush consisted of Major-General Emmet Dalton, Director of Operations, at G.H.Q., Colonel A. T. (Tony) Lawlor, Deputy to Major-General Sean McEoin in the Western Command, Athlone, Captain Peadar McMahon of G.H.Q. Training Staff, and later in his career, Chief of Staff in the army, and Captain John C. F. (Johnny) Doyle i/c Armourers in the new army.

The party travelled in two motor lorries, entering the Park by Islandbridge gate and receiving the guns prepared and ready at the Park entrance to Marlborough barracks.

The guns were then brought by motor lorries to selected positions - at Mary's Abbey and Winetavern Street thus becoming part of the seige force of the Free State Army moving into position around the Four Courts in the darkness of the night of the 27th June.

Comdt. General Tom Ennis was in overall command and with him were Major General Emmet Dalton, Brigadier Paddy O'Daly commanding a detachment of Dublin Guards, and Colonel A. T. (Tony) Lawlor responsible for the only field gun used in the subsequent attack on the Courts. Capt. Peadar McMahon was in charge of the second gun at Mary's Abbey which was not brought into operational use. THERE WERE NO BRITISH PERSONNEL INVOLVED AT ANY TIME.

At 4.10 a.m. the first boom from Lawlor's gun at the corner of Winetavern St. signalled the commencement of operations. The occupying force of republicans in the noble building built to the design of James Gandon in 1796, had rejected a demand for surrender. It was the dawn of June 28th, 1922: the day the divided Irish Republican Army finally erupted into an intensification of Civil War.

The Gun in action at Bridge Street, Col. A. Lawlor on left and Gen. E. Dalton on right.

That first shell from the field gun went careering wildly high over the building on the opposite side of the river - a happening not greatly to the surprise of the gun crew consisting of Col. Tony Lawlor, Capt. Johnny Doyle, a Corporal McLaughlin and two privates, all of whom belonged to the new Free State Army. Not one member of that crew had ever previously handled a field piece and their method of firing was simply to point the gun in the general direction of the target, look for aim through the open breach before putting in the shell, and then hope for the best.

Trial and error brought about handling improvement during the first day of attack, but again ignorance of such weaponry caused unfused shells to be sent thumping against the Four Courts without exploding and causing only exterior damage to the granite walls. However, it can be said that the first intention in regard to the use of the field gun was to cause such menace as might compel the garrison to surrender without bloodshed. This was not to be and the bombardment continued with new shells and growing force. The field gun was moved to Bridge St. with instructions to breach the western end of the building so as to enable the Dublin Guards detachment sheltering close by to storm through whatever opening could be made. The effort proved unsuccessful during the first day of attack. G.H.Q. then contacted Emmet Dalton urging him to obtain 60 pounder guns for the

* At this period the author was a Private in the Army Medical Corps.

**Record of Rounds Fired.**

| Ship or Station | Date | NUMBER OF ROUNDS FIRED* With Projectiles: Proof — Cordite — Nature | | | | Full — Cordite — Nature | | | | ‡ — Cordite — Nature | | | | ‡ — Cordite — Nature | | | | Blank | † Total number of equivalent full rounds | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Powder | Mk. I. | MD | MDT | Size | Powder | Mk. I. | MD | MDT | Size | Powder | Mk. I. | MD | MDT | Size | Powder | Mk. I. | MD | MDT | Size | | | |
| Merrywood 24-7-18 | | | | 3 | | 8 | | | 1 | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | 7 | Fd Engrs. 2cc Paad |
| 28/6/22 Quarry | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Four Courts/Portico | 28.6.22 | | | | | | | | 375 | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | 375 | |
| Millmount Barracks | 7/22 | | | | | | | | 40 | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | 40 | |
| Passage Dist. Bomb. | 8/8/22 | | | | | | | | 25 | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | 25 | |
| | | | | | | | | | 404 | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Glen Imaal | 1-9-22 | | | | | | | | 6 | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | |

The official log sheet of the gun.

purpose. Dalton rejected the suggestion pointing out that the concussion from such heavy guns would cause more damage to the streets from which fired than to the building itself. In point of fact the Liffey wall opposite the 18 pounder gun at Bridge St. had been blown apart by a deflected shell and a house at the corner had collapsed from gun concussion.

Dalton gave G.H.Q. his views of the situation early on the second day of bombardment. He stated that the 18 pounder was sufficient for bombardment and breaches in the West walls had already been caused by shellfire and exploding mines. He had discussed the situation with Brigadier O'Daly and both had viewed the damage done. They had heard on what was considered reliable authority that the Four Courts people had mined their munitions factory with a view of blowing it up as soon as the troops stormed the building. The storming was postponed until later that day and in the meanwhile the 18 pounder returned to its first position at Winetavern St. to continue bombardment in the hope of getting the munitions factory before the troops went in. The Dublin Guards stormed in at about 7 p.m. on the 29th capturing many prisoners and occupying the West section of the building. They suffered casualties.

For two nights and two days the republican garrison withstood a cannonade of shellfire combined with exploding mines and grenades as well as incessant machine gun and rifle fire. The centre block of the great building was shattered and burning and many parts of the Courts had been captured and occupied by the Dublin Guards.

Then suddenly, into the third day, about noon a vast and terrible explosion occurred. The munitions factory had been blown and an enormous column of black smoke and debris rose mushrooming into the mid-day sun. The great records section of the Four Courts had been blown to smithereens taking to irretrievable destruction the mediaeval rolls, the ancient maps, the records of Grattan's Parliament, the priceless family papers, all of which composed the stored records of a thousand years of Irish history. Truly, indeed, the nation was paying dearly for senseless national division.

What caused this last terrible explosion has never been fully explained. Was it, as was claimed or alleged by many, a last act before surrender aimed at the destruction of storming Free State troops? or was it the final shell fired from the 18 pounder gun at Winetavern St. corner. The gun commander seemed to think so: the moment the shell was fired and the great explosion took place the writer saw him raise his cap in a gesture of salute. Perhaps the instructions he had been given had been achieved-to destroy the munition factory before the troops reached that point in the inner defences. Nobody will ever know the true answer to the question of the Four Courts explosion on the 30th June 1922 - Nor does it matter now!

In the silence that followed the explosion a white towel on a pole appeared in token of surrender.

Ordnance records show that the only field gun used operationally against the Four Courts was 18 pounder 2F Mark 2. Serial No. 10756, and that 375 shells were fired in the course of that operation.

---

**DFAA Fixtures**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cross Country (Novice) | 5 Dec. | Phoenix Park |
| Soccer | Dec. 12 | Galway |
| Defence Forces v Combined Irish Universities | | |

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**Pen Pal:**

*Mr. Thomas MacAnnes, 800 Parker St., Roxbury, Mass. 02120, would like serving personnel to communicate with him. He is interested in international military and naval affairs.*

SMITHWICK'S DRAUGHT

Smithwick's people will be there

so stand easy!

*COL. Kevin Nunan has been promoted to Brigadier-General and appointed as General Officer Commanding, Southern Command. A native of Ardfert, Tralee, Co. Kerry, he joined the army as a cadet in 1939. After a short period in the 7 Infantry Battalion, he joined the Cavalry Corps in 1941. He served in the 6 Motor Squadron until 1946 when he became an instructor in the Cavalry School, Curragh. He was appointed School Commandant of the Cavalry School in 1952.*

*From 1959 to 1968 he was OC 1 Tank Squadron. He was then appointed as OC Cavalry Depot, Curragh Camp. From 1972 to 1976 he served as Executive Officer, Curragh Training Camp and was Deputy Quartermaster General from 1976 to 1978 when he was appointed Director of Cavalry.*

*Brig. Gen. Nunan served overseas with the United Nations in the Congo in 1961 and again in 1962/63 when he received a distinguished service medal (1st Class) for rescuing an Irish Soldier from drowning. He also served twice in Cyprus.*

*He is married with seven children.*

*It is interesting to note that the man he is replacing as GOC Southern Command, Brigadier General William O'Carroll (retired) is also a native of Ardfert, Co. Kerry.*

*(Photo: Comdt. J. Kerwin)*

*Lt. Col. Aidan Learnihan has been promoted Colonel and appointed as Director of Supply and Transport. He was born in Kilmichael, Kilrush, Co. Clare and joined the army as a cadet in 1944. He served in the Base Workshops Supply and Transport from 1947 to 1955 when he was posted to 2 Field Company S & T. He was School Commandant of the S & T in 1963 and in 1971 appointed as OC 11 Field Company S & T (FCA). He also held the appointment as Transport Officer, 2 Brigade from 1965 to 1974. He became a Staff Officer in the Directorate of Supply and Transport in 1975. Col. Learnihan served overseas in Cyprus in 1968/69 with the United Nations.*

*(Photo: Comdt. J. Kerwin)*

## What The Papers Notice

### INCREASE IN STRENGTH

DURING the week that legislation covering the Womens Service Corps was laid before the Dail, *Time* Magazine brought forth one of the problems associated with women in the services.

TIME GOES ON -

"When the Navy repair ship U.S.S. Vulcan set sail on a six-month Mediterranean cruise some weeks ago, it had to leave ten crew members behind in Norfolk. Reason: they were pregnant. Rejiggering assignments because of pregnancy is a fact of life these days in the armed forces. Indeed, the pregnant soldier or sailor is becoming as common as the beer-bellied sergeant. At any given time, about 12% of the 130,000 U.S. military women are with child. While some oldtimers grumble that the armed forces are turning into a giant maternity ward, officers are struggling manfully to accommodate the pregnant. Says Vice Admiral Thor Hanson, Staff director for the Joint Chiefs of Staff: "It will have to become a factor, like actuarial tables"."

Before you male chauvinist pigs become too over-bearing consider the following -

"A 1977 Defense Department study showed that Army women lose an average of three working hours per month because of pregnancy. A Navy study done the same year found that women lose less time than men, partly because of the male penchant for alcohol, drugs and general roistering. Females miss an average of 4.22 days a year, compared with 7.03 for males."

Incidentally: "The Pentagon has belatedly moved to meet one of the minor complaints - that pregnant women who outgrow their uniforms undermine morale by appearing at work in civvies. The Air Force and Navy have introduced maternity uniforms over the past 18 months. (The Navy sells them; the Air Force gives them away). The Army will not get around to approving a design until next spring."

Its one answer to the recruiting problem.

## STEADY EDDIE

Eddie McIlwaine writes *An Ulster Log* for *Belfast Telegraph.* This was one of his items on Oct. 18th.

NEXT QUESTION . . .

An Irish Army officer fed the data for an attack assignment into a computer and asked if he should conduct the attack along the left flank of the enemy or the right. The computer belched out the reply which read: "Yes". The officer fed in his next question: "Yes, what?" And the answer came back: "Yes, sir".

Definitely a well trained computer, deserving promotion perhaps to Corporal Cooker.

## ANY VOLUNTEERS

A *Sunday Independent* Reporter (Anonymous) had this exclusive.

"An Irish Army supremo holding the rank of Brigadier with special responsibility for Border security . . . is one of the new measures to emerge from the top secret talks in London last week.

The officer, expected to be stationed in Dundalk, will take charge of an army unit trained in combating terrorists.

Final details have not yet been cleared by the Government, but it is understood that the officer will act as the military arm of the civil power and work in conjunction with an Assistant Commissioner of the Gardai who will be in continuous contact with him. His contact in Dublin will be Commissioner Larry Wren, who is in charge of the elite anti-subversive unit, C3.

Justice Minister Gerry Collins has refused to deny or confirm the new measure, but an announcement is expected from the Government soon."

Supremo is definitely the in appointment as far as Newspapers are concerned. According to the press no modern Army should be without one.

Is there an Irish Translation for this new phenomenon?

## BORDERING ON ILLUSION

There's nothing like seeing the problem for yourself. The *Yorkshire Post* sent their man Michael Hickling to the Border and his report must have made strange reading for those accustomed to the usual "slant" from the British popular Press.

This was the Hickling view -

First Irish Woman to fly in Jet Fighter: Miss Miriam Lyons, Met. Service, Air Corps and Pilot Lt. J. Whyte. (Air Corps photo)

"In popular terms, the border is now represented as an open door through which terrorists, escaping from some unspeakable atrocity in the North, can conveniently pass. They slam the door with impunity in the faces of the security forces in hot pursuit, and stroll into the safe haven of the Republic thumbing their noses as they go.

This picture grossly misrepresents the true situation. Holding it up for public view on the mainland has caused a big swell of resentment in the Republic which, as political events this week in Dublin have shown, threatens to overwhelm the fragile concensus on which any action in the immediate future must be based."

"The country through which the border runs is often low-lying and very heavy, offering gunmen the maximum cover. A liberal sprinkling of abandoned farms and barns offer hiding places for arms.

A 51 mile stretch of the border which includes the section opposite the scene of the massacre of British troops at Warrenpoint is the responsibility of 27 Infantry Battalion of the Irish Army. There is no doubt that the 22-year-old second lieutenant who acted as my guide could have threaded his way along its convoluted way blindfold. He was impressively familiar with all the area's physical and demographic characteristics. He knew his patch like the back of his hand.

The battalion is part of a new brigade based at Gormanston which came into operation this month. This new command structure is designed to combat terrorists in a more effective and flexible way. From what I saw it appeared to be a

Visitors to Collins Barracks, Dublin. Members of Ballymun Residents Association who visited Collins Barracks recently with some of the weapons shown to them by. The Weapons Instructors of Support Company 5th Infantry Battalion. (Photo: Cpl. J. O'Brien).

Pte. J. Gaffney and Pte. S. Hall, A Coy. 29 Inf. Bn., going into action. (Photo: Ronan Quinlan)

very vigorous and effective policing operation." Hickling Abu.

## 21 THIS YEAR

When a land mortal reaches the age of 21 he, or she, gets the key of the Door. What does a Sub Aqua club attain - the key of Davy Jones' locker? The Curragh Sub Aqua Club is 21 years young this year and brought out a very handsome booklet to commemorate the occasion. It always seems strange to associate the Curragh, its plains and sheep, with an underwater activity. However as Mick Moriarty (Membership No. 1) explains in his interesting article the club first surfaced at the Curragh Pool in May 1958. The initial gang of four were Lieut. Mick McDonagh of PE fame, Lieut. Mick O'Farrell, you name it he is famous for it, and "Acting, Honorary, Unpaid, Untrained Corporal Austin O'Donnell of O'Higgins Road Curragh Camp - our tame and only civilian."

Although the club is now firmly based at Sandycove, Co. Dublin where it has a very fine premises at the water's edge it has maintained its proud connections with the Curragh Camp.

## IN THE NAVY

According to the *Cork Examiner* there are stirring times ahead for the Naval Service down South.

"NAVAL CADET COLLEGE FOR CORK

To meet the growing shortage of cadets because of the expansion of the Irish Navy, the Minister for Defence has plans to establish a Naval Cadet College in Cork.

It is expected that the college will operate in conjunction with the Regional Technical College in Cork where a **pilot** scheme for the training of marine engineers for the naval service has been in operation for nearly two years.

When established in the not too distant future it will no longer be necessary for officer recruits to travel to England for a year's course at the Naval College at Dartmouth.

The Irish Naval Service has its base at Haulbowline, Co. Cork. A recent recruiting campaign at home and abroad for marine engineers was stated by the Minister to be "successful". But he pointed to problems in this area because of the attraction and demands of the Merchant Navy."

Then according to Donal Musgrave, also in the *Cork Examiner*, the Navy are being sent to Spike but for reasons of expansion rather than correction.

"SPIKE ISLAND in Cork Harbour is to undergo a multi-million pound development aimed at transforming the former prison colony into a key base for the Irish Naval Service.

This emerged in Cork last night where the Minister for Defence, Mr. Robert Molloy, T.D., announced that consultants have been commissioned to study the building of a bridge or causeway to the island which now serves mainly as a quarantine area for imported cattle and other animals.

Speaking at a dinner to mark the launching yesterday of the fishery protection vessel Aisling by Mrs. Noreen Fitzgerald, wife of the Minister for Labour, Mr. Gene Fitzgerald, T.D., Mr. Molloy said that the existing base on Haulbowline will be inadequate for the expanded naval service of the 1980's.

"Various proposals aimed at rectifying this situation are being examined at present" said the Minister. "For example a study will be carried out in the immediate future on the feasibility of having a bridge or causeway constructed

between Haulbowline and Spike Island."

Spike Island will be transformed into a base where the naval service can expand on over 180 acres of largely unused land. The cost of developing the island and of building the bridge will run to millions of pounds.

The lonely quarantined Charollais on Spike are delighted with the news but as one of them said "I hope its not all bull again."

## THE DAYS OF EMERGENCY

Col. Dan Bryan wrote an article on "The Days of Emergency" for the *Irish Times* in which he mentioned an "alarm" at Christmas time 1940 due to a German "Request". Terry De Valera of Foxrock in a letter disputed the facts and thought that the 1940 threat came from a different direction altogether.

Col. Bryan replied

"Sir, - Permit me to refer to Mr. Terry de Valera's letter (September 10th) re my article on "The Days of Emergency". The only reason I did not mention a threatened invasion of British forces about Christmas 1940 was because there was no such "threat". The "alarm" was due to a request by Germany that the obstructed airfield at Rineanna be cleared to permit the flying in of service attaches. As stated in the article but incorrectly dated, the whole Defence Forces were then stood to arms. No explanation of the "stand to" was understandably issued at the time, and the myths referred to in the article have grown probably because of the following circumstances.

Just before the German "alarm" there had been an "alarm" re the British forces and some troops in the Dublin area had been moved to "alert" positions. The major German "alarm" was then telescoped on to the British "alarm" without explanation, and officers affected by the previous alert assumed it was a major intensification of that alert.

The position, as General McKenna, General Officer Commanding the Forces saw it, was described by Joseph T. Carroll when he was preparing his book "Ireland in the War Years". Urgently recalled from an inspection tour he found Oscar Traynor, Minister for Defence, waiting for him in the small hours. Traynor said ominously: "It's happened". McKenna asked: "Which side is it"? And Traynor answered "The Germans"."

However Terry De Valera, though only an LDF Volunteer, had sources not available to even such an eminent specialist as Col. Bryan.

Wrote Mr. De Valera.

"Sir, - I am glad that Colonel Bryan (September 18th) took the trouble to reply to my letter (September 10th). I fear, however, that I must entirely disagree with his statements regarding his denial of a threatened invasion by British forces at Christmas time, 1940 and for the reasons set out hereunder.

Firstly, however, I might remark that if only a German invasion was threatened as the colonel so strongly suggests it does seem odd that large forces, which could be ill spared, were standing to arms facing northward some distance south of the Border in instant readiness to meet an attack from north of the Border. I was then only a volunteer (private) in the LDF as it was known later, and while I would not wish to contradict a professional soldier like Colonel Bryan, on a military matter, or as to the proper deployment of troops, it does strike me as odd and a most peculiar piece of tactics or strategy to deploy large forces facing the Border with the Six Counties and to hold a line from the south of Donegal to the sea at Louth if one was instantly awaiting a German invasion or even "alarm" as the colonel states. Somehow I should have thought (but I was then only a young private on the reserve) that a German invasion had of necessity to come from a quite different point of the compass as everyone knew that there were no German troops in the Six Counties but equally well everyone knew what army was in that area (and still is). I do not speak, however, as a young private in the reserve or as claiming any special knowledge of military strategy. Indeed no, rather I speak for the first time, after a lapse of almost 39 years and in a quite different capacity as being of necessity and for definite reasons, privy to certain information at that particular time, directly, from a source even more senior and responsible than that of the late and much respected Minister for Defence at the time, the late Oscar Traynor, or any Army officer including the late General McKenna, the equally respected GOC Defence Forces. Colonel Bryan as a former intelligence officer will have no difficulty in knowing my source and I do not think that the reader will have any difficulty in guessing. I am aware that I have the advantage of Colonel Bryan in possessing this information and I must now ask him to accept the real danger or threat of a British invasion at that particular time. This threat was far more real than that which Colonel Bryan now admits in his letter but tries to pass off as merely an "alarm". Having held a tight silence, as I felt bound, for almost 39 years, I feel free at last to speak, but for the colonel's and the reader's information I was not prepared at this point of time, to release any more information on this subject but hope to publish more on the "Emergency" at some future date.

Yours, etc.,
TERRY DE VALERA,
Charton,
Foxrock, Co. Dublin.

We await the publication with interest.

## VISITORS

Our units with UNIFIL have had a succession of visitors, civilian and military, all anxious no doubt to make life more bearable in troubled Lebanon. According to Donal Foley in the *Irish Times* one distinguished visitor received a request not relating to the Area of Operations, but as the song says "There's no place like Home".

According to Donal Foley -

"Frank Cluskey recently visited the Lebanon to see the Irish soldiers. While he was talking with them the particular contingent came under fire and the soldier to whom he was talking had to burst into action. He was blazing away with his machine gun, when he suddenly turned to Frank and said "I wonder, Mr. Cluskey, could you get me that house in Kimmage?" Truly a politicians work is never done."

A recent returnee from the Lebanon suggests that Donal Foley intended to include this item in his more fanciful "**Man bites Dog**" column.

## AN ILLEGITIMATE EXCUSE

Those who have had interpretation problems in various far-flung fields will appreciate this item from the *Daily Telegraph.*

"Sir Patrick Macrory, who, among other talents is a banker and military historian, sent me this story about the late Sir Gerald Templer during his days in Malaya, which I find impossible to resist passing on. It seems that Templer wanted to rebuke some villagers for weak behaviour towards the Communists.

He addressed them in blunt, soldierly terms, but of course, his words had to be translated:

Templer (in English): You're a pack of useless bastards!

Translation: The General says he knows none of your fathers and mothers were married to each other.

Templer: I'll show you I can be an even bigger bastard!

Translation: But the General says that his father and mother were not married either."

The locals must have felt much closer to the General after that.

### Bronze for Cadets

To mark the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the Cadet School at the Military College, Officers throughout the PDA subscribed towards a commemorative bronze for the Cadets Mess.

The Chief of Staff unveiled the bronze which was executed by Vincent Brown. With the symbols of the Cadet School it depicts the commissioning of the first cadet class and in the foreground the legendary battle of Cuchulainn and Ferdia.

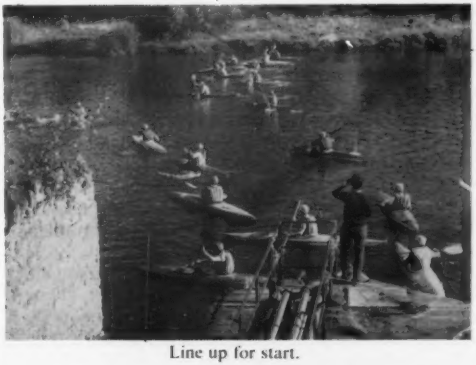
### Any Complaints?

The importance of the well-being of Navy families as vital to the iptimum functioning of Navy men is the reason for the Family Ombudsman Program in the 'jigsaw puzzle of combat readiness.' The Family Ombudsman Program is open-ended in potential and limited only by a CO's imaginative use of it and the quality of the ombudsman he selects to represent his command.

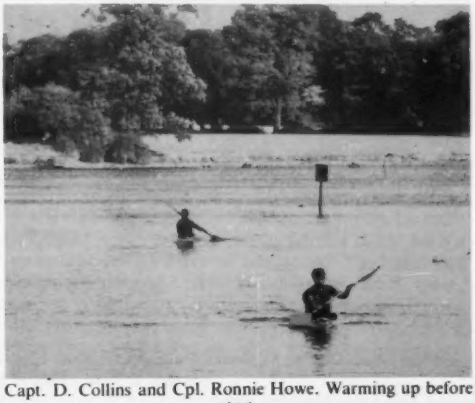
(PROCEEDINGS. U.S.A.)

Private David Murphy from 30 Inf. Bn., Stephen's Bks., Kilkenny, who presented Pope John Paul II with a young Oak Tree at Galway, receives a medal from his Holiness. David made the presentation on behalf of the young people of the Diocese of Ossery.

### ALL ARMY CANOE RACE



Line up for start.



Capt. D. Collins and Cpl. Ronnie Howe. Warming up before start.

# Terence McSwiney Competition

*First Prize in the* **Terence McSwiney Centenary Essay Competition** *was Gnr. V. Foley, 2 Bty. 1 FAR from Bishopstown, Co. Cork. This is an extract from his essay -*

'Thursday, August the 12th 1920 was by all accounts a pleasant evening in Cork. The citizens had become accustomed to the warlike activities. The War of Independence was at its height, but in spite of all, there were apparently short periods of respite. In the Lord Mayors' rooms in the City Hall a Brigade Council meeting was being held. Some of the most wanted men in the country were present. Events moved quickly. Between two and three hundred British soldiers from Victoria barracks surrounded the City Hall. The raid was carried out with remarkable precision.

Terence McSwiney and ten other volunteers were arrested. They were taken to the detention Barracks, tried by a district courtmartial presided over by Lieut. Col. James. The notorious Major Percival was a member of the court.

Terence was asked if he was represented by counsel, he replied, "The position is that I am Lord Mayor of Cork and Chief Magistrate of this city and I declare this court illegal."

When further questions from the prosecuting counsel were asked Terence reminded them of his position. "These proceedings are quite illegal. Anything I have to say is not in my defence. You will realise before very long that the Irish Republic is really existing. The gravest offence that can be committed by an individual is an offence against the head of state, it is marginally less when committed against the head of a city."

"The court finds you guilty . . .", Lieut. Col. James was interrupted by the Lord Mayor - "I will put a limit to any term of imprisonment you may impose. I have taken no food since my arrest, therefore, I shall be free in a month - alive or dead."

He was sentenced to two years imprisonment on August the 18th. He was lodged in Brixton Prison. His state of health relieved him of the cruel horrors of forced feeding. The heroic hunger-strike of our first citizen had begun.

Europe and America were ringing with McSwiney's name. Hostility to England increased. Protests and appeals poured into 10 Downing Street, Many English people were deeply distressed, the government was embarrassed. "You know Father Dominic, it was God brought me to Brixton so that Ireland's cause might be made known to the world, people always talk about me but, the other people in Cork are making a greater sacrifice." Even in his weak condition he was deeply concerned about the suffering of others. On October 25th, 1920, after seventy-five days of fasting, Terence McSwiney completed his last sacrifice for Ireland.

Terence McSwiney returned to Cork to lie in state in the City Hall. Almost all the citizens of Cork filed past him. Dr. Cohalan gave the final absolution and Arthur Griffith spoke at the Republican plot. During those tragic days it was with a sense of triumph that comrades were buried, "They have left us our Fenian dead."

The War of Independence dragged on with new inspiration. The British Empire was being dismantled. Then, The Treaty and down the corridor of time to the E.E.C. and now the E.M.S. Ireland taught the world the right to Independence. She has advanced towards the goal of her heart's delight. "A man must be prepared to labour for an end that may be reached only in another generation."

**Dockrells**

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## "SONG OF GLORY"

THE original idea for this mammoth undertaking emanated from the Military College. Lt/Col. Colm Cox, Commander of the Cadet School approached Lt/Col Con Sullivan, with the idea. The proposal received an enthusiastic reception from Brigadier-General D. Hurley, G.O.C. Curragh Command with the result that the society was reformed and a major undertaking was under way.

A sixteen strong executive committee to stage the show was formed, headed by Colonel Pat Lavelle, OC, Infantry School, and any peace and quiet that the Military College may have known was immediately shattered. Everyone got behind the project, and their efforts together with help from other units in Camp ensured the success of the project.

Press receptions were held at Plunkett Barracks, Curragh, and in McKee Bks., Dublin, to ensure the necessary publicity. Lt. Col. C. O'Sullivan explained that the show would cover the period 1870 to 1916 and would be a collection of Drama, Music and Dance during that period, ranging from Parnell right through to the 1916 rebellion. It would trace the history of National Development during that period, but the accent would lean heavily on music, song and dramatic pageant. The programme, lasting for 2½ hours, would include a large variety of songs, recitations, a judicious intermingling of Gaelic music, song and dance and a World War I sequence to highlight the public euphoria expressed in song at the start of the war, followed by the poetic expressions of its bitterness and tragedy towards the end of the conflict.

All in all a cast of 300 was involved and it entailed great organisation, and a lot of hard work to get everyone properly rehearsed and the whole pageant properly co-ordinated. For at least 6 to 8 weeks the cast had been working extremely hard, together with the many people involved behind the scenes, to ensure that the project would be a success. In fact, visiting the Military College during the period, one was immediately taken with the hustle and bustle from classroom to learning ones lines, to rehearsal and back again with "Song of Glory" the words on everyones lips. Jobs were found for everyone, and the Command and Staff Course was extremely lucky to get off so lightly!

Rehearsals were carried on at night and often did not finish before midnight, including I might add on Saturdays and Sundays. However, there was a great air of co-operation, drive and enthusiasm to ensure the success of the project.

Musical arrangements for the presentation were by Comdt. Denis Mellerick who also conducted the Band of the Curragh Command. The playing of Chopins Polynaise under his baton has been the subject of very favourable international comment by the media during the Papal Arrival at Dublin Airport. Comdt. Mellerick was also a founder member of the Curragh Musical Society and was Musical Director for all its highly successful previous shows.

Capt. Mick O'Shea as Pearse.

However, the real success of a "Song of Glory" were those who with little previous acting experience came up trumps in their respective roles and contributed enormously to the overall enjoyment of the pageant. Chief among these was Capt. Mick O'Shea, an Instructor in the Infantry School, who played the main role of P. H. Pearse and was excellent in the part. He was ably supported by other Officers from the Military College, who played the roles of James Connolly, William Pearse, Tom Kettle and several World War I soldiers, all were excellent and were ably supported by thirty Cadets - who said Cadets could not act? - and over 20 others who appeared in the crowd scenes.

D. O'G.

### REVIEW

In the past this Society has produced excellent musicals, but this was the first time that an original script and music was attempted. The producer, Lt. Col. Con O'Sullivan and the Musical Director, Comdt. D. G. Mellerick undertook this task, and the combination of their talents was an undoubted success. Over three hundred artists took part, and the back stage team was also large. With tremendous flair Lt. Col. O'Sullivan controlled the chorus, dancers and actors, producing memorable balletic movements, exciting crowd scenes, and poignant tableaux, especially one depicting the triumph and tragedy of the Great War. The music for the different episodes was arranged by Comdt. Mellerick: it was entirely fitting for the story, with a fine balance of pathos and jubilation. The band was in fine form and, with the Nas na Ri Singers, ensured maximum audience enjoyment. Frank Patterson, tenor, sang appropriate linking songs, while the part of Pearse was strongly played by Capt. Mick O'Shea who has a fine speaking voice

**(Contd. on page 336)**

# A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

When Con Ryan wrote his epic, *A Bridge Too Far,* he didn't get sufficient information to go far enough! writes Tom MacAndrews (Cavalry Corps rtd.)

WHEN I first read *A Bridge Too Far* I marvelled at the amount of detailed material Con Ryan had uncovered, after nearly three decades had elapsed. We had been neighbours, sort of. He had lived on Rathgar Avenue which was one of the spurs off Rathgar Cross-roads, while I lived on Highfield Road, which was another spur. As schoolboys I suppose we knew one another to see, as it was not a teeming populated area. I also had an uneasy feeling that the story was incomplete. I had read other accounts of this battle which had differed from Ryan's, but I couldn't put my finger on the difference. Then, turning out the attic last Autumn I came across an old copy of the U.S. Cavalry Journal, May—June 1948. It contained a feature headlined "The Guards Armoured Division in Operation Market-Garden" by Lieut. Colonel Hugh M. Exton, Instructor, Command & General Staff College, USA. I read it over and immediately it was clear what Con Ryan had omitted. Nowhere in his book did he mention VIII Corps on the right flank of XXX Corps, nor XII Corps on the left. This is an extraordinary omission except for the fact that Con Ryan had never been a soldier. He had been a war correspondent. He would not have been conscious of the necessity of knowing who was on the right and left, and, it is asserted, the information was deliberately withheld. Lieut. Colonel Exton's article stated "(b) Mission of VIII Corps was to advance on the right of XXX Corps to protect the right flank and rear". In the event, VIII Corps made a complete bags of its mission, as the article further states, in the conclusions, " . . . 8 and 12 Corps would advance on each flank of 30 Corps, thus protecting the axis . . . stiff enemy resistance rendered this impractical . . . necessary for the Guards Armoured Division to use some of its own troops for the protection of the axis."

VIII Corps consisted of four U.S. Infantry Divisions. XII Corps consisted of four British divisions, but they were on the open, sea-side of XXX Corps, and had only small garrisons to cope with.

It is true of course that Lt. General Brian Horrocks in his combat orders to XXX Corps did mention that VIII Corps would be on his right, but added the rider that he feared they would not be able to cope with the advance of XXX Corps. As XXX Corps advance was slowed down to a walking pace, this rider seems to have been somewhat academic, and judging by the pasting XXX Corps took on the right, VIII Corps must have failed to get into the battle at all, let alone protect the right and rear of XXX Corps.

The withholding of this information from Con Ryan brings into sharper focus the failure of General Eisenhower to cancel the attack, when he was informed that the presence of 9 and 10 S.S. Panzer divisions at Arnhem, had been confirmed. His reason that he had already approved the attack seems rather tenuous, as airborne formations are more prone to cancellation than any other formations, even the weather can foul them up. Instead Eisenhower sent Lt. General Bedel Smith to tell Montgomery, but there is not any recording of how that officer presented the state of the enemy to Montgomery. Field Marshal Montgomery was a cautious johnny all right, but his caution sprang from dislike of "Butcher's Bills". It was not at all like him to go ahead and drop his men into a super hornet's nest that had the initials "S.S." and was likely to produce his biggest "Butcher's Bill" of all his campaigns. It simply wasn't Montgomery!

What a pity that great writer, Con Ryan, has gone to his reward. If he had lived he might have had material for a sequel to *A Bridge Too Far* entitled, perhaps, *In the Footsteps of VIII Corps.* But maybe one is too hard on VIII Corps. It seems they had a good distance to cover to get up to the 'Start' line, and they adopted the hazardous ploy of by-passing German strongpoints, in their hurry to be where the real action was taking place. This was a disaster. Their supply line literally disappeared and they were left high and dry and far from the right flank of XXX Corps.

But none of this appeared in Con Ryan's version, and as previously asserted, the information was deliberately withheld. What do I base my statement on? Simply this. The information must have been given to Con Ryan by a U.S. military man of some standing and rank. Professionally he would not omit the flank guards when presenting the battle pattern to Con Ryan. Therefore the omission was deliberate.

County Clare men must have been intrigued by the cropping up of familiar Anglo-Irish names in the advance of XXX Corps. The Vandeleurs were all over the place of course, while the stand of Lieut. Colonel Frost on the bridge of Arnhem has passed into history.

It may be argued that Lieut. General Brian Horrocks, who read the book, did not offer any

(contd. on page 336)

# Book Reviews

**"DUNKIRK - ANATOMY OF DISASTER" Patrick Turnbull. B. T. Batsford Ltd. £6.95.**

Besides being an author of some reputation, Patrick Turnbull has been a soldier of great experience. He has written what the French Foreign Legion has called their "most prestigious history" - "The Foreign Legion" (Heinemann) and fought with the commandos behind Japanese lines in Burma.

His *"Dunkirk - Anatomy of Disaster"* is hardly an in depth study of the German invasion of FRANCE and the LOW COUNTRIES in May 1940. Rather has the author fallen between two stools. He interweaves his own experiences as "a motor contact officer"(?) with an ad hoc British force, with an expose of the shortcomings of the French General Staff during the battle of France. His own experiences during both the "Drole de Guerre" and the BLITZKREIG appear to be minimal, but may be understated, and are an intrusion in the serious side of his study of the French and British Commanders.

His main theme is that but for the vacillations of the French, the Germans could have been signally defeated in the WEST while they were attacking POLAND. He quotes GENERAL WESTPHAL, C-in-C of German Forces on the FRANCO-BELGIAN border as saying "I felt my hair stand on end when I considered the possibility of a French attack". The French could muster 90 divisions, 2,500 tanks, 10,000 guns and an intact air-force, against a mere 32 LANDWEHR and 11 Regular German divisions. In addition the B.E.F., well trained and led, were considered the best professional army of the day. However the French vacillated and the Germans duly picked their time and place, and the rest is history.

Two of the people who take the major pasting from the author are the Premier of France PAUL REYNAUD and the ancient (84 year old) Marshal of France PHILIPPE PETAIN. Both have their private lives paraded for the reader and both are painted as doddering fools.

Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery also makes a brief appearance in the narrative and behaves with his customary arrogance, but by and large the author is exceptionally kind to the British-generals and does not scatter the accolades to either German or French generals.

In general this study is lightweight. The inclusion of some unexciting photographs and some incomprehensible campaign maps adds to the general lack of excitement.

V. F.

**THE POETRY OF THE ANGLO-BOER WAR (1899-1902). M Van Wyk Smith, Oxford. The Clarendon Press, 1978. £9.50 net in U.K.**

This, as the title indicates, is a study of the Boer War poetry, with full analyses. Explanation is certainly needed, as poetry is an expression of emotion, in which moods change. Much of the English verse quoted is, understandably, at once chauvinist (then called jingoist) and self righteous. There was, however, also a humanistic or pacifist school, equally self-righteous. There seems to have been no great output from the U.S. or the Colonies and virtually none at the time from the Boers themselves. They were then a patriarchial people with a primitive language, in which the only required reading would be the Old Testament. Later, when a new Afrikaans language was developed, there came a considerable output of ballad-style verse, describing battles, sufferings and volume of verse, all slanted one way. This was apparently accompanied by volumes of cartoons; the author mentions one depicting Queen Victoria crawling along the battle posts to distribute bars of chocolate to skeletons. Another vivid caricature is reproduced of English princesses presenting the V.C. to a young drummer boy who had successfully raped eight Boer women. Few writers of distinction joined in; in England Hardy, Kipling and Houseman and in France de Banville, Rostand and Sully Prudhomme tended to revert to irony or disillusion at all the vain sacrifice.

Irish comment was singularly muted. The author records that Maud Gonne and John Macbride were hard at work in Paris in the Boer cause. W. B. Yeats, then in London, was silent, perhaps becuase his original patron W. E. Henley, - who had also launched Kipling, Ryder Haggard, Conrad, Wells and Barrie, - had now reacted against the decadence school of Wilde and became a strong imperialist. Lady Gregory, as might be expected, was more down to earth. Writing in 1903, she recorded how an old Galway woman had said to a policeman who expected to be drafted into the Army "Don't be killing the men of my religion". "The Boers are not of your religion". "They must be Catholics or the English would not be against them". On another occasion, when the Connaught Rangers were setting off from Galway station, she heard wives begging their husbands not to be too hard on the Boers. Lady Gregory also translated a savage Gaelic Ballad against Queen Victoria; it invokes a sombre "curse of the Boers" on the Queen who had killed so many people. Another popular ballad, printed in Reynold's Newspaper when the Queen visited Dublin, directs irony against the one who had beheaded Robert Emmet and hanged the three Manchester Martyrs, but was now encouraging her Irish soldiers to wear the shamrock on their headgear.

"They wear the green that you were slain
In wearing long ago".

The whole theme is interesting, if only as an illustration of how poetry, passion and prejudice can reflect such opposing pictures of truth. This particular war was a long time ago and modern opinion, as reflected in the media, now takes a rather different view of modern Boers. It would be interesting to have a similar study of the verse of two later World Wars. New attitudes might be discernible.

P. N. N. S.

**ALL IN THE DAYS MARCH. Major General David Belchem. Collins. £7.50.**

David Belchem certainly had an interesting and varied military career. It began under David Niven, who was his Term Under-Officer at Sandhurst, and ended on the Staff of Field Marshal Montgomery. This reviewer regretted that the story contains much more about Montgomery than it does about Niven, but then the former would have much more of a beneficial effect on a career officer's career than the latter.

Having said this, to coin a cliche, it must be admitted that this is a most lucid and readable book. Apart from the accounts of the campaigns in North Africa, Italy and Normandy, there is a topical glimpse of pre-war soldiering in Palestine.

Students of World War II, and cinema goers, will be interested in General Belchem's inside information on the Battle of the Bulge. Naturally enough, he makes much of Montgomery's efforts to bring order out of chaos when he took over command of the U.S. First Army. It is not generally realised that Montgomery had no less than twenty U.S. Divisions under his direction before the Ardennes situation was eventually stabilised.

The German propaganda machine was quick to exploit the U.S. resentment at General Eisenhower's brave but unpopular decision to put Monty in charge. Radio Arnhem, a German station, broadcast some very belittling comments, in English, on a frequency very close to that of the BBC, at the same news-cast times, and General Bradley believed for many months that the items were further examples of British "toffee-nosed conceit". Indeed, according to Belchem, Bradley's relations with Montgomery, always lukewarm, never recovered from the incident.

An interesting book, well illustrated.

J. O'L.

**"THE ROYAL OAK DISASTER" by Gerald S. Snyder. Grenada Publishing Ltd. 1978. £0.95p Paperback.**

A green buoy marked WRECK, in a lonely anchorage in the Orkney Islands, marks the resting place of the battleship "Royal Oak", sunk by a German submarine on 13th October 1939 with the loss of 833 lives. The sinking horrified the British public for it happened in Scapa Flow, the great Home Fleet base of the Royal Navy, deemed impregnable. Here in 1918 came the defeated German Navy to surrender, and a few months later to scuttle itself.

The Royal Navy considered the base inaccessable to enemy

submarines and was mainly concerned with the dangers of air attack. Sunken blockships guarded all entrances and nature provided boiling tides, sweeping in from the Atlantic through the Pentland Firth, to make it a navigator's nightmare even in good weather. In World War One two German submarines were lost whilst trying to get into the anchorage, falling foul of minefields in the approaches.

How then did U-47, commanded by Korvettankapitan Gunther Prien succeed? The answer is by doing his homework, detailed preparation, intensive training and above all having the conviction that he could and would succeed. For Prien was undoubtedly a man full of self confidence, just what was needed in the swirling tides off Scapa. No time there for hesitation or self doubt.

He was formerly a merchant seaman, holder of a master mariner's certificate but unemployed when Hitler came to power. After a few months as a foreman of a road construction unit of the Voluntary Labour Service, where in lieu of pay he received board and lodging, he learnt that the new expanding German Navy was seeking officers from the merchant service. Prien joined at once and was sent to the U-Boat school at Kiel. By the outbreak of war he was commanding U-47 and in her he died, with all his crew during a convoy battle on 6th March 1941.

But several crewmen who were with him in U-47 when she, sank the "Royal Oak" are still alive. On return from that mission they had been transferred to other boats of the expanding U-Boat force where their experience was needed. Three of them travelled to Portsmouth in 1967 at the invitation of the local branch of the Royal Naval Association and attended ceremonies at the War Memorial.

The author captures very well the tension and excitement of the breeching of Scapa Flow, in moonlight, on the surface, passing 40 feet off sunken blockships, actually scrapping along the chains of moored mines, like a 'heavy rattle against the hull'.

But one must criticize him for the use of 'slang', inattention to detail and the direct translation of German documents which distort their meaning. A master mariner's qualification is a certificate, not a 'ticket'; unless the Hamburg Seamen's School is different to all others the world over, one does not 'climb a halyard'; and it would be impossible to sail on "a square rigger the s/s Hamburg". One expects better from the holder of a "Bachelor of Journalism degree from the School of Journalism of the University of Missouri".

That said, this is a most readable book, telling the facts on one of the most startling incidents from the early weeks of World War Two.

Frank Forde.

**"THE PRICE OF GLORY" Alistair Horne. Penguin. £1.25 + VAT.**

This book, about Verdun 1916, was first published in 1962 and was well received by the critics. When you start to read it you realise its age for it clearly preceeded the idea of plain words. You will find "hubris" and words like that. You also get apt quotations between the chapter headings and the text proper. The first fifty pages contain the lead up to the battle and are so cliche strewn and so after the fashion of WW1 histories that you feel like sloping off and whistling "What A Friend We Have in Jesus" as you disappear towards the setting sun.

But then your flagging spirits revive as you are plunged into the Battle of Verdun. The manner in which the battle is related is excellent; you are given the plan and then you follow the combatants as important developments unfold. Pioneer Sergeant Kunze with a small detachment sent to clear obstacles actually captured a fort! And then he proceeded to eat the captured victuals therein, unaware of his incredible achievement. Throughout the drama of Verdun different personalities moved upstage, downstage, made exits and entrances. We read of each of these in turn and follow the battle in this way. It is a frightening account of a battle which was novel in many ways; it was the first battle of attrition for Falkenhayn's aim was not a normal one - he wanted purely and simply to 'bleed the enemy white'.

Verdun's defence was also not normal; common sense indicated a retreat. But Verdun was a symbol and has remained one ever since. It is deeply embedded in the national conciousness of France as indeed is the matter of Marshal Petain - then France's saviour later her "traitor"? One acquires a great sympathy for the poor man and one welcomes recent efforts to restore his honour. They say that the French lost in WWII because they won at Verdun in 1916 and when you read this book you will appreciate why. I recommend that you do. Unless you know of and appreciate Verdun 1916 you cannot begin to understand the twentieth century.

Capt. Cathal Laftus

**RICHARD HEATON OF BALLYSKENAGH. 1601-1666. Laurence Walsh, O. Cist. Parkmore Press, Roscrea.**

An army chaplain who became known as the first Irish Botanist is the subject of this well researched and interesting publication. It marks the centenary of the foundation of St. Joseph's Abbey, Roscrea, which is built on land owned by the chaplain-botanist three hundred years ago.

Born in Yorkshire, Richard Heaton came over here with Lord Deputy Thomas Wentworth in 1633, and he later became Rector of Birr and, after the Restoration, Dean of Clonfert. His botanical discoveries were made in the Edenderry, Roscrea and Gort districts, and by 1650 eight of his listings were published in *Phytologia Britannica*, by William How. Another record of Heaton is found in State Papers, where a document survives and proves that the parson loaned money to the last of the O'Carroll's of Ballyskenagh. Heaton acquired this property, and it now forms part of the lands of Mount St. Joseph. In telling his story Fr. Walsh has endeavoured to fill in the political and social background of the period, and his studious researches have resulted in a most interesting story, which makes a useful contribution to this neglected period of our history.

C. C.

**"THE FRONTIERS OF THE SEA". Peter Ustinov. Panther. 95p.**

It would be impossible to define Peter Ustinov's style of writing, or even to single out his favourite subject: the stories in this book vary from American politics to an English suburban home. Always humourous, they are told interestingly and entertainingly. Gripping adventure is not to be expected, however; these nine short stories are thoughtful and superbly written works of entertainment, with excellent plots. The descriptions of the sea, characters and town in the title story are particularly masterful.

This collection (first published 1960) does justice to Ustinov's reputation as an actor, playwright and novelist.

D. C.

The following books have also been received:

**Terrorism** by Walter Laqueur - Weidenfeld & Nicholson. £8.50

**All in the Days March** by General Belchem - Collins. £7.50.

**Revolutionary Violence** by Anthony Burton - Leo Cooper Ltd. £6.50.

**Weapons and Equipment of the Victorian Soldier** by Donald Featherstone - Blandford Press. £5.95.

**The Bear at the Back Door** by General Sir Walter Walker - The Foreign Affairs Publishing Co. Ltd. £5.00.

**Riding to Jerusalem** by Evelyne Coquet - John Murray. £6.95.

**Napoleon's Cavalry and its Leaders** by David Johnson - Batsford. £6.50.

**Natural Remedies for Common Ailments** by Constance Mellor - Granada Paperback. 95p.

**The Storm Petrels** by Gordon Brook-Shepherd - Collins. £5.40.

**The Road to Passchendaele** by John Terraine - Leo Cooper. £11.50.

**Supplying War** by Van Creveld - Cambridge University Press. £7.95.

**Peace in the Middle East** by David Astor and Valerie Yorke - Corgi Books. £1.95.

**The Involvement of the Super-Powers in the Middle East**, by Peter Mangold. Croom Helm Ltd. £5.

**The Sensuous Woman**, by J. Mayflower paperback 80p.

**A dictionary of British Folk Customs** by Christina Hole. Paladin. £2.50.

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